

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /068 W

----- 034797

R 160800Z JUL 76 ZFG

FM ASLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5981

INFO AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 1309

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CH

SUBJECT: MAO'S HEALTH

1. THE "TOURIST" VISIT TO PEKING JUNE 16-21 BY RENOWNED VIENNA NEUROLOGIST PROFESSOR WALTHER BIRKMAYER, A SPECIALIST IN PARKINSON'S DISEASE, TOUCHED OFF A FLURRY OF PRESS AND DIPLOMATIC CORPS SPECULATION HERE THAT HE MIGHT HAVE COME TO CONSULT WITH MAO'S DOCTORS. THIS WAS DENIED BY PROFESSOR BIRKMAYER AND BY AUSTRIAN EMBASSY OFFICERS. (ADDRESSEES WILL HAVE SEEN AFP AND REUTER DISPATCHES OF JUNE 23.) BUT WORD REACHED HERE THIS WEEK THAT BIRKMAYER DID IN FACT MEET WITH A TEAM OF MAO'S PHYSICIANS, ALTHOUGH HE APPARENTLY DID NOT EXAMINE THE CHAIRMAN. CONTACTED IN VIENNA BY A REUTER CORRESPONDENT (WHO WILL PRESUMABLY FILE THE STORY SHORTLY), BIRKMAYER ACKNOWLEDGED THAT DIPLOMATIC NICETIES HAD DICTATED HIS EARLIER DENIAL. AFTER DISCUSSING THE CHAIRMAN'S CASE WITH THE CHINESE PHYSICIANS -- AND IT APPEARS THAT THEY MADE NO SECRET

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OF THEIR PATIENT'S IDENTITY -- BIRKMAYER EXPLAINED HIS

SPECIAL TREATMENT AND PRESCRIBED A REGIMEN. (FOR VIENNA:
WE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION WHICH MIGHT BECOME
AVAILABLE ON BIRKMAYER'S CONSULTATIONS CONCERNING MAO.)

2. MEANWHILE, THE LOCAL RUMOR MILL CONTINUES TO GRIND
OUT NEW VARIANTS OF OLD STORIES CONCERNING THE CHAIRMAN'S
HEALTH. THE SOVIETS, WHO ALONG WITH THEIR EASTERN EURO-
PEAN COLLEAGUES HAVE
BEEN PUSHING HARD THE "MAO IS WIRED
UP" (TO LIFE-SUSTAINING EQUIPMENT) THEORY, HAVE CRYPTO-
CALLY ADVISED A WESTERN DIPLOMAT THAT "MAO CANNOT
POSSIBLY DIE BEFORE OCTOBER 1".
GATES

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Message Attributes

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